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Accelerationism, Hyperstition and Myth-Science

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1. Accelerationism and Hyperstition

> The future must be cracked open once again, unfastening our horizons towards the universal possibilities of the Outside. – Nick Srnicek and Alex Williams

I want to begin this brief exploration of accelerationism and hyperstition - in relation to what I call (following Sun Ra and Mike Kelly) 'myth-science'[1] - with a quote from the essay 'Escape Velocities' by Alex Williams (one of the co-authors of the 'The Manifesto for an Accelerationist Politics' (MAP)) and which itself offers some proposals on what form an accelerationist aesthetics make take:

> as regards political accelerationism, what becomes crucial is the ability of a reconstituted Left to not simply operate inside the hegemonic coordinates of the possible as established by our current socioeconomic setup. To do so requires the ability to direct preexisting and at present inchoate desires for post-capitalism towards coherent visions of the future. Necessarily, given the experimental nature of such a reconstitution, much of the initial labor must be around the composition of powerful visions able to reorient populist desire away from the libidinal dead end which seeks to identify modernity as such with neoliberalism, and modernizing measures as intrinsically synonymous with neoliberalizing ones (for example, privatization, marketization, and outsourcing). This is to invoke the idea, initially coined by Land's Cybernetic Cultural Research Unit, of *hyperstition* - narratives able to effectuate their own reality through the workings of feedback loops, generating new sociopolitical attractors. This is the aesthetic side of the task of constructing a new sociotechnical hegemony.[2]

This is Williams' second proposal. The first, which I will return to, involves 'processes of epistemic conceptual navigation'; the third 'design of interfaces of

[1] In relation to Sun Ra (and Afrofuturism more broadly) see Kodwo Eshun's discussion 'Synthesizing the Ominiverse', *More Brilliant than the Sun: Adventures in Sonic Fiction* (London: Quartet, 1998), 154-63). The artist Mike Kelley, in an essay on Olaf Fahlstrom ('Myth Science', *Oyvind Fahlstrom: The Installations* (Ostfildern: Hatje Cantz, 1995), pp. 19-27) links the term more particularly to the fictioning aspect of contemporary art practice - especially in its expanded form.

[2] Alex Williams, 'Escape Velocities', *E-Flux* 46 (June 2013): 9.

control'; and the fourth and final 'a blueprint for action in complex systems'.[3] Although these four are brought together under the rubric of aesthetics, we might, tentatively, also identify the different disciplinary regime each operates within: Art (the second (the long quote above)), Philosophy (the first), and the last two, Design, broadly construed.

Two aspects are worth highlighting in terms of the second and more art-orientated proposal for hyperstitional practices (as Williams defines them): the first is the operation of temporal feedback loops that allow a fiction to become real (for Williams this is the utopic function of an accelerationist aesthetics that helps bring about its own visions and predictions). The second is the positing of sociopolitical attractors that are generated through this process, but, we might say, are also generative of it. Again, this is the different visions - but also narratives - that might contribute towards a politics of transformation (however this is understood), as well as being an outcome of this process.

To deepen this definition we can turn to two sources. The first of these, what we might call the ur-souce of accelerationist ideas on fiction, is, as Williams himself remarks, the Cybernetic Culture Research Unit (Ccru) set up by Sadie Plant, and then 'led' by Nick Land after her departure from academia. Here, hyperstition, as laid out on the Ccru website, involves four inter-connected characteristics:

1. Element of effective culture that makes itself real.
2. Fictional quantity functional as a time-traveling device.
3. Coincidence intensifier.
4. Call to the Old Ones.[4]

The first and second of these are the pre-cursors to Williams' second proposal for an accelerationist aesthetics. Hyperstition, in Ccru's definition, is a fiction that makes itself real through time-travelling feedback loops: it operates as a future vision thrown back to engineer its own history. Coincidence, the third characteristic, might be said to be a secondary effect of this process (insofar as coincidence is suggestive of alternative narratives, connections through time, or what Jung calls synchronicity).

The second 'source' definition, more developed and hermetic, is from the Hyperstition website, from the page 'Polytics: Elements of Hyperstition'. Here hyperstition involves three aspects 'interlocked in a productive circuit of simultaneous, mutually stimulating tasks'. Here they are in full:

1. Numogram. Rigorous systematic unfolding of the Decimal Labyrinth and all its implexes (Zones, Currents, Gates, Lemurs, Pandemonium Matrix, Book of Paths…) and echoes (Atlantean Cross, Decadology…). The methodical

[3] Williams, 'Escape Velocities', 9-11.

[4] https://web.archive.org/web/20030204195934/http://ccru.net/syzygy.htm (accessed 23 January 2014).

> excavation of the occult abstract cartography intrinsic to decimal numeracy (and thus globally 'oecumenic') constitutes the first great task of hyperstition.
>
> 2. Mythos. Comprehensive attribution of all signal (discoveries, theories, problems and approaches) to artificial agencies, allegiances, cultures and continentities. The proliferation of 'carriers' ('Who says this?') - multiplying perspectives and narrative fragments - produces a coherent but inherently disintegrated hyperstitional mythos while effecting a positive destruction of identity, authority and credibility.
>
> 3. Unbelief. Pragmatic skepticism or constructive escape from integrated thinking and all its forms of imposed unity (religious dogma, political ideology, scientific law, common sense…). Each vortical sub-cycle of hyperstitional production announces itself through a communion with 'the Thing' coinciding with a 'mystical consummation of uncertainty' or 'attainment of positive unbelief'.[5]

The first of the above amounts to the positing of a deep (and inhuman) numerical reality that is characteristic of some of Nick Land's writings, but also, although less overt, of some more recent Left accelerationist writing (the essay 'On Cunning Automata' in *Collapse VII* by Alex Williams and Nick Srnicek) that attends to High Frequency Trading (and which itself references Land's work on what he calls the *nomos*). I will return to the Williams and Srnicek essay below and then, briefly, to an indicative essay by Land on numbers.

The third characteristic of hyperstition - 'constructive escape' - is also clearly determinant in Land's recent writings (not least those on his xenosystems blog), but also connects with William's own first proposal - epistemic in character - for an accelerationist aesthetics. It is worth quoting the latter in full:

> First to epistemic aesthetics. The spatialized conception of the navigation and ramification of conceptual spaces at the core of Negarestani's notion of epistemic acceleration has an immediately aesthetic dimension, a highly visualized approach, grounded in the mathematics of topos theory. This abstract mathematical aesthetic of gesture, navigation, limitropism, and pathway-finding reroutes the philosophy of mathematics away from a basis in set theory and logic, and instead seeks an ultimately geometric ground.[6]

In Part 2 of this essay I look in more detail at Reza Negarestani's own argument for an 'epistemic accelerationism' which, as Williams suggests, is the

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[5] http://www.cold-me.net/polytics/ (accessed 23 January, 2015).

[6] Williams, 'Escape Velocities', 9.

source of this particular proposal for an accelerationist aesthetics. [7] Certainly, it is worth mentioning here that there is work to be done on figuring the connections between art practice - broadly construed - and these more philosophical operations of conceptual navigation that are themselves heuristic and experimental. [8]

In 'On Cunning Automata' this navigational practice - a 'universal accelerationism' - is opposed to any sole preoccupation with an increase in speed - or 'dromological accelerationism' - as found, Williams and Srnicek argue, in Land's thesis, but also, at least at present, in the sharp end of capitalist development (High Frequency Trading).[9] In their own inflection on universal accelerationism, Williams and Srnicek suggest that the latter might be thought of as a form of *metis* (the cunning of the essay's title) that is opposed to *tekne* or, indeed, *poesis*.[10] Crucially, it is not simply a question of pitching *metis* against a capitalism that operates through a more straightforward algorithmic *tekne*, for, as Williams and Srnicek point out, capitalism increasingly utilizes strategies of *metis* in order to mitigate against the limit-point of more typical High Frequency Trading (the speed of light).

To return now to Williams' second proposal on hyperstition (the one I began this essay with), we might note that although it is clearly related to the two sources I mentioned above, and especially to the Ccru definition, it does not include Ccru's fourth proposition ('Call to the Old Ones'), a proposition that itself loops forward to the second definition on the Hyperstition website: 'Mythos'. In terms of the latter we are provided not just with a definition, but in the writings of Ccru and Hyperstition, an example: 'the artificial agencies, allegiances, cultures and continentities' that operate

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[7] See my 'Accelerationism, Prometheanism and Mythotechnesis', *Aesthetics after Finitude,* ed. Amy Ireland, Baylee Brits and Prudence Gibson (Melbourne: re:press, forthcoming).

[8] Negarestani himself has initiated this work with his own essay on Jean-Luc Moulene, *Torture Concrete: Jean-Luc Moulene and the Protocol of Abstraction* (New York: Sequence Press, 2014).

[9] Alex Williams and Nick Srnicek, 'On Cunning Automata', *Collapse*, no. 8 (2014): 486-90.

[10] The practice of *metis* also comprises Williams' fifth and final proposal for an accelerationist aesthetics:

> Finally, we have the aesthetic of action in complex systems. What must be coupled to complex systems analysis and modeling is a new form of action: improvisatory and capable with of executing a design through a practice which works with the contingencies it discovers only in the course of its acting. This can be best described through the Ancient Greek concept of *metis*, a particular mode of cunning craft. (Williams, 'Escape Velocities', 9-10)

Williams' third proposal - more design orientated - involves attending to human-machine interfaces on a more pragmatic basis:

> Third, we have the idea of an aesthetics of interfaces, control rooms, and cognitive maps. Here, an important aspect of rendering reality tractable, and hence furthering the overriding accelerationist project of maximal collective self-mastery, is the ability to marshal and interact effectively with data. (Williams, 'Escape Velocities', 9)

as origin of all signal (as 'Call to the Old Ones' suggests) is the Cthulhu mythos (alongside a host of other associated and more minor players).

In terms of the more recent accelerationist writing I mentioned above we do get a brief discussion of myth in 'On Cunning Automata' (in relation to *metis*) - specifically with the identification of the trickster: 'The suppressed form of intelligence known as *metis* (as opposed to *poesis* or *techne*) denotes "skill with materials guided by a cunning intelligence", and is identified strongly with the figuration of the trickster in ancient mythology'.[11] And a couple of pages later:

> The figure of the trickster is common to almost all pre-modern mythic traditions. Lewis Hyde gives a complete history of such characters, who include Loki (Norse), Prometheus (Greek), Monkey (Chinese), and Coyote (Amerindian), with echoes of the trickster appearing in a more tame form in childhood folkloric figures such as Brer Rabbit.[12]

But this appearance of a pre-modern and mythical figure in Williams and Srnicek's essay is not, I think, a form of hyperstition insofar as it does not (at least as gestured to here) meet the key criteria of mythos understood as source of all signal (although, certainly, the trickster, might well operate as 'carrier').

We might also ask the question here of whether a trickster can be an effective agent of accelerationist transformation in and of themselves? Does the trickster have the ability to 'change the transcendental of a world' (as Srnicek and Williams put it in their essay) as oppose to just playing with and within a given world? Gilles Deleuze offers an interesting inflection on this in his differentiation of the trickster from the traitor: the first operating within a given regime albeit to subvert its terms (a world turned upside down as it were). The second breaking with a given regime, or world, altogether (Deleuze links this to the question of signifying and asignifying regimes: 'A traitor to the world of dominant significations, and to the established order. This is quite different from the trickster…').[13] I will be returning to this idea of the traitor towards the end of this essay.

Tricksters aside, mythos, it seems to me, is lacking, or at least deeply occluded, in recent accelerationist writings. Indeed, although Williams addresses hyperstition in his 'Escape Velocity' essay (as do Srnicek and Williams, albeit more obliquely, in the MAP) and, as we have seen, points towards the importance of the 'composition of powerful visions' for an accelerationist politics, Cthulhu, or any other hyperstitional entity, is not mentioned.

Nor do we find it, or any mention of mythos, in what I take to be the two chief philosophical articulators of accelerationism, Ray Brassier and Reza Negarestani (although, certainly, the latter attends to mythos in his own highly original fiction-

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[11] Williams and Srnicek, 'On Cunning Automata', 491.

[12] Williams and Srnicek, 'On Cunning Automata', 493.

[13] Gilles Deleuze and Claire Parnet, 'On the Superiority of Anglo-American Literature', *Dialogues*, trans. Hugh Tomlinson and Barbara Habberjam (London: Athlone, 1987), 41.

philosophy *Cyclonopedia: Complicity with Anonymous Materials* and, indeed, was one of the authors of the Hyperstition website). In fact, it seems to me that this occlusion of mythos is determinant of recent accelerationism (at least of the Left) which, we might say, generally follows Williams' first proposal for an accelerationist aesthetics, namely, conceptual navigation. Certainly the introduction of any fictional or mythic narrative into this strictly rational and pragmatic programme is at odds with its own self-definition. In terms of Brassier's own Promethean attitude we might make the claim that mythos is precisely contra science and rationality, and, indeed, that it would involve a deployment of something more 'folk', the reinforcement of a manifest image as against the scientific image (not least as it privileges belief over proof). In terms of Negarestani's more recent writings, mythos might risk re-entrenching an idea (and, again, image) of the human and thus stymie the latter's re-definition and re-engineering via reason (although a mythos like Cthulhu involves something specifically non-human, insofar as it operates through fiction rather than science it might be said to privilege a certain folk idea of the human). Again, I will return to both Brassier and Negarestani (and in particular their accelerationist writings) in Part 2 of this essay.

In terms of the aforementioned MAP, the issue with mythos (and perhaps the reason also that it is absent in Williams' own account of hyperstition) is, I think, that too often myth is regressive, precisely *anti*-accelerationist. Put simply, myth is often at the service of a reactionary Right rather than a progressive Left. Indeed, this, it seems to me, is an instructive paradox of accelerationism, which, in a kind of hyper-modernity, makes a call to 'accelerate the process' as the famous quote from *Anti-Oedipus* has it, and yet, if not always on the surface, contains (at least in its pre-cursors) something that is decidedly less modern. In fact, in terms of a more overt persistence of mythos (in this particular strain of recent continental philosophy), one that is both hyper-modern *and* pre-modern (when pre-modern is understood as specifically pre-Enlightenment), one must look to the key accelerator of recent accelerationist writings: Nick Land.

2. Land and Mythos

> Garbage time is running out. Can what is playing you make it to level 2? – Nick Land

Land, who first coined the term hyperstition at Ccru, is both a rigorous philosopher and adept hyperstitional practitioner. His writings, especially those from the 1990s, employ pre-existing fictions, but also attempt to fictionalize reality themselves: they are pitched as time loops in which the future they predict impacts back on the present in order to bring about that very future. The essays of this period are written in an experimental, but precise style. They are economic and sparse, but also stylistically reminiscent of a Ballard or even, at times, a Burroughs. This amounts to saying that as well as any obvious philosophical content Land's writings of the 1990s proliferate

other kinds of image-worlds and alternative narratives. To take three indicative examples:

1. 'Circuitries'. Here an explicit Science Fiction narrative accompanies the more theoretical work of re-patterning Deleuze-Guattarian desiring-production - by way of Norbert Wiener - as cybernetics (the laying out of a machinic unconscious).[14] Positive feedback loops (another name for hyperstition) are pitched against the stabilization effect of negative ones: the call is for ever more mutation and deviation from the norm. The essay itself begins with a kind of filmic narrative - staccato and cut-up (reminiscent of Burroughs' *Nova* trilogy) and ends with Artaud's peyote induced prophetic - and poetic - utterances.

2. 'Meat (or How to Kill Oedipus in Cyberspace)'. This essay is, again, both politico-philosophico treatise *and* cyberpunk fiction, drawing in as many fictional characters and avatars (as its conceptual personae) as it does philosophical concepts and authors in order to people its particular techno-dystopic landscape. [15] Thus we have Kurtz of *Apocalypse Now* alongside, again, Artaud (the latter himself an interference between any strictly demarcated planes of philosophy from art - or conceptual personae from aesthetic figures).[16] And *Terminator* alongside Deleuze and Guattari's desiring-machines.

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[14] Nick Land, 'Circuitries', *Fanged Noumena: Collected Writings 1987-2007*, eds. Robin Mackay and Ray Brassier (Falmouth: Urbanomic/New York: Sequence, 2011), 289-318.

[15] Nick Land, 'Meat (or How to Kill Oedipus in Cyberspace)', *Fanged Noumena: Collected Writings 1987-2007*, eds. Robin Mackay and Ray Brassier (Falmouth: Urbanomic/New York: Sequence, 2011), 411-40.

[16] Alongside Artaud we can position Bataille as the second key philosophical personae in Land's myth-system (with Nietzsche and Deleuze as the final two key thinkers - both of these figured as deterritorialisations from Kant). Indeed, some of Bataille's comments on heterology and race are echoed in Land's more recent writings on racial difference (although Bataille is clear - see below - that the issue of racism is human and historical rather than scientific):

> Racism is a specific aspect of a deep *heterophobia* [hatred of difference], *inherent in humanity* and whose general laws we cannot avoid […] The worst case is that of the Blacks, whose glaring difference is ineradicable. One could describe the antagonism as inevitable, to the extent that a tangible difference has a property of stability: so it is futile to argue that difference is ill-founded according to science. It is not a question of science: in racist attitudes, theory has only a secondary influence. To see racism as an evil idea is to turn away from a problem whose essentials are never located in *ideas*: nor are they in *nature*. They are contingent and aleatory, they are *historic*, which is to say *human.* (Georges Bataille and Michel Leiris, *Correspondence* (Calcutta, London, New York: Seagull Books, 2008), 71-2)

Land's first monograph was on Bataille (*Thirst for Annihilation: Georges Bataille and Virulent Nihilism* (London: Routledge, 1992)), with other essays from the early 1990s

3. ‘Meltdown’. The most extreme of the three, especially when listened to in its original techno-format (a free cassette was attached to the first issue of the original *Collapse* fanzine).[17] Here the human becomes mere drag on a capitalism that is increasingly on the loose (what Land, later, will call ‘teleoplexy’), with ‘K-tactics’ pitched against ‘control’ (although it is not clear whether the latter - control - is itself a capitalist imperative, or, in fact, a fetter *on* capitalism). The writing here is reminiscent of Philip K. Dick - a writing *on speed*.

In terms of any hyperstitional mythos, the entity - in ‘Meltdown’ - is capitalism itself, and humans, again, merely the organic puppets and platforms of this techonomic ‘Thing’. Indeed, we might make the claim here that a further key reason for the absence of mythos, understood in its hyperstitional sense, from Left accelerationism is that the source of all signal (at least in Land’s accelerationist writings) is precisely everything the Left positions itself against: a non-caring (indeed, non-human) agency that is operating back on the present from a future it is helping to construct.[18]

These essays are not, however, simple projections into the future, or even time loops of future-presents, insofar as they also involve a mixing up of other past times - a veritable temporal syncretism. In ‘Meat’ for example, shamans and becoming-animals conjoin with the futuristic xeno-matrix and with an increasingly operational neuro-technology. This temporal layering is doubled by a spatial collapse where Africa meets Europe in a creolisation of different cultures (and their attendant technologies).[19] Hyperstition, here, is far from the abstract navigations of a stripped down rationality (or indeed of a typical Left utopianism).

In the essay ‘Circuitries’ the strange temporality capitalism, and especially its retroactive orientation, is further laid out. As Land remarks at the end of that essay: ‘How would it feel to be smuggled back out of the future in order to subvert its antecedent conditions? To be a cyberguerilla, hidden in human camouflage so advanced that even one’s software was part of the disguise? Exactly like this?’[20] Here hyperstition becomes a kind of ‘technology of the subject’ insofar as it involves a

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(before Ccru) on Nietzsche and Deleuze, perhaps most notably: ‘Art as Insurrection’, *Nietzsche and Modern German Thought*, ed. Keith Ansell-Pearson (London: Routledge, 1991), 240-56; and ‘Making it With Death: Remarks on Thanatos and Desiring-Production’, *Journal of the British Society for Phenomenology*, vol. 24, no. 1 (1993), 66-76).

[17] Nick Land, ‘Meltdown’, *Fanged Noumena: Collected Writings 1987-2007*, eds. Robin Mackay and Ray Brassier (Falmouth: Urbanomic/New York: Sequence, 2011), 441-60.

[18] Or, to put this slightly differently, and from an NRx perspective as it were: a Left hegemony deliberately obscures - masks - its own deep operating structures. Hence the NRx mantra: ‘Are you ready to take the Red pill?’

[19] This impulse to an accelerationist creolisation is evident in Kodwo Eshun’s important writings on Afro-futurism and Sonic Fiction. See the book mentioned in my footnote 1 and ‘Further Considerations of Afrofuturism’, *CR: The New Centennial Review*, vol. 3, no. 2 (2003), 287-302.

[20] Land, ‘Circuitries’, 318.

paranoid fictioning of *what* the human actually is (backward-hurled agent of a future state of capitalism or hyper-prosthetic technology that is increasingly outrunning its progenitors: Terminator or Replicant?).

There is more to be said about Land's work of the 1990s - and of Ccru more generally - especially in relation to recent accelerationist writings.[21] Indeed, elsewhere (in a review of *Accelerate: The Accelerationist Reader*) I have pointed towards the absence of a certain libidinal materialism, which, at least to some extent, was present at that Warwick scene and in the writings that emerged from it.[22] The above few comments points towards a further absence: of mythos, or hyperstition in its full sense. I made the claim in my review article that art practice was perhaps a place to find this missing desiring subject insofar as it can involve constructions of the affective alongside the conceptual: new kinds of syntheses and other experimental conjunctions. [23] These becomings, which are never simply rational and technological (although they might well involve both of these), can operate as a molecular betrayal of more molar categories and identities. [24]

In terms of hyperstition - understood as a kind of fictioning of reality - it is likewise towards art that we might look to find these other narratives, with their accompanying images, objects and assemblages. Art practice, it seems to me, involves what Mackay and Avanessian call for in their Introduction to *Accelerate*, namely, 'new science-fictional practices, if not necessarily in literary form'.[25] Such 'new' practices will necessarily involve experimentation with different kinds of thinking - and with the idea that fiction is itself a form of thought - as well as other explorations into what material forms this thought might take. In fact, to briefly return to Williams' own essay on accelerationist aesthetics, it seems to me that he is entirely correct to

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[21] And in relation to Ccru's hyperstition more needs to said of their sometime collaborators, the nomadic art collective 0[rphan] D[>rift] that actualize - in practice - some of the tenets of hyperstition via a mobilization of Science Fictional avatars and a syncretic spatial and temporal mixing of worlds (see http://www.orphandriftarchive.com (accessed January 23, 2015)).

[22] See my 'The Missing Subject of Accelerationism', *Mute*, no. 12 (2014) http://www.metamute.org/editorial/articles/missing-subject-accelerationism (accessed January 23, 2015).

[23] In terms of these experimental encounters and conjunctions see also my 'Art Practice as Fictioning (or, Myth-Science)', *diakron*, no. 1 (2014). http://www.diakron.dk (accessed January 23, 2015). It seems to me that Mark Fisher's recent writings (on his blog (http://www.k-punk.org (accessed January 23, 2015) and elsewhere) are instructive in this regard, especially in the prescient call for new (and popular) libidinal figures adequate and appropriate to a reanimated accelerationist Left.

[24] For more on this idea of becomings contra concepts see my 'Memories of a Deleuzian: To Think is Always to Follow the Witches Flight', *A Thousand Plateaus and Philosophy*, ed. Henry Somers-Hall, Jeffrey Bell and James Williams
(Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, forthcoming).

[25] Robin Mackay and Armen Avanessian, 'Introduction', *Accelerate: The Accelerationist Reader* (Falmouth: Urbanomic/Merve: Berlin, 2014), 37.

note - in his first proposal - that new forms of conceptual navigation might themselves be aesthetic in nature (the creation of concepts certainly has this character). Such navigations will be experimental and surprising - unforeseeable - almost by definition.

Could it be claimed that Land's 1990s essays (again, alongside the whole scene in Warwick in the 1990s) are predominantly aesthetic in character in both this libidinal and fictioning sense? Which is also to say that any critique levelled solely at their conceptual content (however inventive this was) risks missing a certain stylistic aspect which is equally, if not more important (in the same way in which the style of Ballard or Burroughs - the fragmentation of narrative and layering of image, the use of experimental syntax, the cut-up, and so forth - is as important as any content. Indeed, can content and form be disentangled in these cases?).[26]

To return to hyperstition itself, in Land's more recent writings there is less of the overt use of fiction, or, indeed, the Science Fiction style of the 1990s essays (though there is still the economy of expression and precision), but there is a continuing emphasis on feedback loops in which a future is operational in the present. The essays also remain hyperstitional in that they continue to posit an artificial entity from which all signal originates (even when this entity has nothing that might be called an agency as such). A mythos is still deployed albeit it has been stripped of its more syncretic accretions, emerging in a more streamlined and deadly version: an unleashed capitalism 2.0. To give three examples:

1. 'Teleoplexy: Note on Accelerationism'. Here teleoplexy (a '(self reinforcing) cybernetic intensification') is the hyperstitional entity for whom the human subject in its typical and traditional form is more or less irrelevant or, at worst, a temporary obstacle.[27] Accelerationism, then, in Land's terms 'appears to be an impossible project' (at least for humans), insofar as 'the theoretical apprehension of teleoplexic hyper-intelligence cannot be accomplished by anything other than itself'.[28]

2. 'Transcendental Risk'. In this, the most recent of the three essays (from *Collapse VII*), teleoplexy is outed as an AI entity (or 'emergent singularity') of a runaway capitalism that, again, is oblivious to humans - and that is, in Land's view, the outcome of the transcendental risk of the essays title (a venture capitalism that risks everything). A traitor rather than a trickster perhaps? Certainly, in Land's terms,

[26] Style, in this sense, has it own politics. It can open up a 'foreign language within language', breaking with more vehicular registers of meaning (and with the operation of 'order words'), whilst also containing the germ of languages-yet-to-come. In an author like Burroughs (and could we also say Land?) this other politics - of style - can undercut declared political allegiances.

[27] Nick Land, 'Teleoplexy: Notes on Acceleration', *Accelerate: The Accelerationist Reader* (Falmouth: Urbanomic/Merve: Berlin, 2014), 509-20 (quote from p. 515).

[28] Land, 'Teleoplexy: Notes on Acceleration', 520.

although this risk remains tied to capitalist imperatives, and, as such, might be said to still operate in the world as constituted.[29]

3. 'Qabbala 101'. In an essay that is slightly earlier and not concerned with capitalist development per se, numbers are themselves the inhuman entity (if they can be called as such), with the practice of numeracy pitched against a numerology that insists on symbolizing - humanizing - number: 'Archetypes are sad limitations of the species while numbers are an eternal hypercosmic delight'.[30] This particular essay, in its exploration of numerical deep structure (or, precisely, occult knowledge) returns us to Hyperstition's first definition of itself as regards the 'numogram' ('The methodical excavation of the occult abstract cartography intrinsic to decimal numeracy').

In each of these cases humanity - as a species - plays very much a secondary role to an inhuman intelligence, which, at least in the first two of the essays, is produced by a capitalism now increasingly following its own evolutionary trajectory. Land, it might be said, has sided with this immanent process - this future teleoplexic entity - against his own kind.

To move now from accelerationism, at least as a recognizable 'movement', to something that more explicitly utilizes a pre-modern and fictional mythos: Land's recent neoreactionary writings to be found on his xenosystems blog.[31] In fact, here we find a number of different myth-systems, from 'Gnon' (more on 'him' in a moment) to the reappearance of Cthulu - alongside more 'traditional' narratives such as *Paradise Lost* with Land figuring himself as a Satan pitched against the Cathedral of heaven (or, in terms of a more recent Hollywood mythos, as Sith Lord against the Republic). Throughout, a pre-modernism - even a paganism - is utilized as resource against the perceived impasses (and increasingly restrictive nature) of the present.[32] Indeed, on the xenosystems blog, pre-capitalism meets hyper-capitalism with Land as carrier-agent.

In particular it is horror - and what Land calls 'horrorism' (an abstract horror of the 'Outside') - that is determinant of Land's neoreactionary mythos.[33] Entities (if,

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[29] Nick Land, 'Transcendental Risk', *Collapse*, no. 8 (2014), 361-84.

[30] Nick Land, 'Qabbala 101', *Collapse*, no. 1(2006), 282.

[31] http://www.xenosystems.net (accessed 23 January 2015). Land's other 'less evil' blog - Urban Future (http://www.ufblog.net (accessed 23 January 2015)) - involves further writings on accelerationism (amongst other future-orientated economic, political and technological issues (and a focus on China)), but little on hyperstition per se (beyond the recurring interest in time loops, or what Land calls 'templexity' (see also Land's recent *Templexity: Disordered Loops through Shanghai Time* (Shanghai: Time spiral Press, 2014)).

[32] Land name checks Arthur Machen's *The Great God Pan* in his writings on abstract horror, but we might also note here the importance of The Archdruid Report blog for Land, with its declared intention to explore the 'ongoing decline and impending fall of modern industrial civilization' (see http://thearchdruidreport.blogspot.co.uk (accessed 23 January 2015)).

[33] Land has recently published a book of horror fiction in this vein. See *Phyl-Undhu: Abstract Horror, Exterminator* (Shanghai: Time Spiral Press, 2015).

again, they can be called as such) like Gnon (a mutant acronym for the God of Nature) or 'The Great Filter' (the idea that something (or, perhaps, some 'Thing') effectively eradicates Galactic civilizations at a certain level of technological development) sit alongside other kinds of non-human agency - and are conjoined with films like *Terminator*, *Alien* and *The Thing* to produce a very particular contemporary mythos (although, once again, these more recent filmic instantiations are laid alongside other older literary forms, and, crucially, are placed in the company of maverick thinkers and writers such as the occultists Alastair Crowley and Kenneth Grant).

In each case there is the suggestion of a deeper reality involving something decidedly not-us, but that is also clearly a threat to us (insofar as it is not invested in 'our' survival). This 'Thing' - our exterminating angel - is, however, something which we ourselves are implicated in: although alien it is also our own techno-commercial system finally let loose. Once again, Land offers up a future vision of a capitalism that has begun re-engineering its very origins. Neoreaction as a movement (NRx), at least in Land's definition, is concerned with these future feed-back circuits, but also, again, with more retroactive trajectories. It is, to quote Land from his blog, a 'time-twisted vector that spirals forwards into the past, and backwards into the future', a project in which the contemporary moment - dominated by the democratic Cathedral - is torn apart by *other* forces.

In fact, it is antagonism towards the Cathedral, understood by NRx as the broadly left-wing parliamentary-media-academic institution (or simply the 'Left'), that unites what is otherwise a fairly disparate gathering of individuals (and bloggers). For the latter the Enlightenment has taken a wrong turn (to the Left) and the only solution is exit: spatial (hence 'seasteading'), but also temporal: again, into the future (the neo) or into an invariably mythic past (reactionary). In passing, we might return to Hyperstition's third definition of itself: 'Pragmatic skepticism or constructive escape from integrated thinking and all its forms of imposed unity (religious dogma, political ideology, scientific law, common sense…)'. For Land, simply, this means exit from the Cathedral.[34]

On the xenosystems blog Land maps out a 'trichotomy' that leads from these twin impulses of neo and reaction: 1. The Religious/Traditionalist (or Theonomists). This is the more reactionary prong, and, clearly, one that mobilizes pre-modern myth most explicitly; 2. Ethnic Nationalists. The most immediately recognizable Right-wing strand which, again, involves the mobilization of myth (especially of origins); and 3. Techno-commercialists - or simply Capitalists, where, of course, Land predominantly sits.

As well as utilizing myth (of another time in which things were - and will again be - different), this NRx trichotomy itself becomes a myth in Land's hands (he writes at least one Science Fiction narrative about its possible worldly instantiation

[34] The thesis on and against the Cathedral is laid out in detail in Land's series of essays on 'The Dark Enlightenment' available at: http://www.thedarkenlightenment.com/the-dark-enlightenment-by-nick-land/ (accessed January 23, 2015).

and there are various asides on the blog pointing to the resonances between the trichotomy and more established myth-systems such as Hinduism with its caste system and, invariably, Lovecraft's Cthulu). In a further nod to hyperstition Land makes the claim that a unifying feature of these different strands of NRx is the belief in a 'deep order of society' that is opaque to rational analysis.[35] Once again, deep structure - and an accompanying occult knowledge - is a key component in the NRx myth-system.

Most alarming about the xenosystems blog (at least for this reader) are the links to other Right-wing blogs that more overtly use myth in a more explicit project of political demarcation and exclusivity (premised on ideas of racial purity). In fact, it is the preoccupation in these, as well as in some of Land's own writings, with the thesis of 'Human Biological Diversity' (HBD) that is, perhaps, the most dangerous aspect of the NRx thesis insofar as an argument about racial difference being grounded in biology can lead to a 'scientific racism' with its various 'natural' hierarchies and judgements (although, interestingly, Land will also mention - in his long essay on 'The Dark Enlightenment' for example - a Science Fiction mythos like Octavia Butler's xenogenesis with its particular thesis of inter-species miscegenation).[36]

On the one hand a straightforward critique of the NRx position on race is important (it seems clear that the politics tend towards racism - even if Land's own antipathy is directed more at the human race in general (indeed, *anti*-racism is one of the key characteristics of Land's avowed enemy, the Cathedral)). But - as I hope I have made clear - Land himself cannot be dismissed so easily. This is not only because of the (granted unlikely) possibility that he is writing via a series of parodic personae ('The proliferation of "carriers" ("Who says this?") - multiplying perspectives and narrative fragments'), nor that his writings evidence a certain philosophical rigor and persistence often lacking in the academy (he does makes his case as it were), but more simply because his writings have a libidinal charge - a certain kind of affect - that is infecting a new generation of thinkers. Indeed, in this respect, something carries over from the Ccru days and Land's writings continue to

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[35] In fact, for that other key NRx thinker/blogger (and, in many ways, the pro-genitor of the 'movement'), Mencius Moldburg, this 'deep' and hidden structure is the Cathedral itself - or, as it were, an agency/entity that lurks behind the latter: Cthulu. See Moldbug's formative NRx aphorism 'Cthulu always swims to the left' from Part one of 'A Gentle Introduction to Unqualified Reservations' (http://unqualified-reservations.blogspot.co.uk/2009/01/gentle-introduction-to-unqualified.html (accessed 23 January 2015).

[36] In the blogosphere HBD is often presented as neutral and scientific (and, indeed, as a self-evident truth, albeit unpalatable to those on the Left with a social constructivist bent of mind). Indeed, the claim is made that race is just one aspect of this biological diversity (see, as indicative: https://hbdchick.wordpress.com/1007-2/ (accessed 23 January 2015)), and yet, if one looks to the NRx blog community it is clear there is a preoccupation with issues of race (alongside those of gender) with a privileging of more traditional categories and identities, tending towards Patriarchy and white supremacy.

operate as a dangerous transmissible meme.[37] Put bluntly, there is something compelling about the mythos Land deploys, even if one disagrees with the politics.

More generally we have proof here that mythos, including the mythos of Land himself, is as powerful as any reasoned argument (or, indeed, rational programme). It seems to me that there is important work to be done in relation to this terrain - where myth - and fictioning - switches from simply an aesthetic supplement to playing a very real political role (which, of course, is its hyperstitional aspect).

3. Myth-Science and the People-to-Come

> *Europeanization does not constitute a becoming but merely the history of capitalism, which prevents the becoming of subjected people.* – Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari

In order to get some traction on this terrain I want to return to, and develop, some of my own work on myth-science from my book *Art Encounters Deleuze and Guattari: Thought Beyond representation* (and to some remarks Deleuze and Guattari make in the chapter on 'Geophilosophy' from *What is Philosophy?*). There I made the point that it is crucial to demarcate those myths which might be fascistic from those which are genuinely liberatory. The former includes the 'blood and fire' myth-system of the Nazis (the 'master-race'), or indeed any mythos premised on exclusion (a 'them and us' logic); the latter - more open myths - includes the stuttering and stammering minorities of Deleuze and Guattari's minor literature (here the people-to-come 'belong' together because they do not belong anywhere else). We might note here the importance of being historically specific when it comes to the analysis of these myth-systems. The Nazi mythology, for example, cannot be divorced from its context, the fertile ground of an economically depressed 1930s and 40s Germany.

Could we make the claim here that the NRx mythos is likewise determined by a very particular socio-economic context: a neoliberalism that has effectively paralyzed and stymied any viable political options or subjectivities (as also evidenced by the more mainstream rise of 'democratic' Right-wing parties (one thinks of UKIP in the UK) and, indeed, other more extreme fascist groups? And could we also make the claim that with concepts like HBD a certain exclusivity is being set up - a difference 'written in the genes' as it were - between a them and an us, one that installs hierarchies, but more importantly effectively stymies any becomings or, indeed, more straightforward transformations and progressions (the possibility that someone can, well, change)?

Those associated with NRx would no doubt counter this with the claim that it is the Left (the Cathedral) that operates as despotic and exclusionary - and there is something in this, at least at first glance: one need only look to the racial and class make up of 'Left wing' University Departments and other Left media institutions

[37] Thanks to conversations with David Burrows and Kodwo Eshun for discussions around this point (and, more generally, for ongoing conversations that have fed into this essay).

despite what they might claim for their politics (the Guardian newspaper springs to mind). For NRx it is this Left, precisely, that operates as selective and hierarchical - operating through membership rituals and protocols.[38] But, we might ask, is it really a faceless Left hegemony that is behind these existing exclusions? Or is it not more a case of a structural class and racial inequality that, invariably, is manifest in even the most Left orientated organizations and that is overtly manifest in NRx itself? And more importantly is it not possible to disentangle an apparent Left (that might well be the default - or drag - setting of our media and educational systems) from something that really is inclusive? A Left politics in which doors really are open to all?

Attention also needs to be paid to the components of a myth-system and how these function to mobilize libidinal investment. Again, in the case of the Nazis this seemed to involve a very particular combination of pre-modern, often Nordic (but also non-Western) avatars and archetypes alongside certain ideas of technological progress and machinic warfare - as well an interest in occult knowledge, and, of course, the imagining of a mythical (and Northern) 'Fatherland'. Although Land's NRx mythos is not Nazi it nevertheless involves this peculiar combination of pre and hyper modernity, alongside an interest in hidden knowledge (deep structure/Cthulic entities) and the positing of future autonomous city-states, themselves premised on exclusivity and categorization of biological types.

In *What is Philosophy?* Deleuze and Guattari are also keen to demarcate these fascistic myths from what they see as more libertarian enterprises. This is the demarcation of transcendent utopias (that set up an origin/telos and/or another world that doubles our own) from those more immanent ones (which are connected to the present milieu), a demarcation that can be difficult in that it is not always entirely clear where one category of utopia ends and the other begins. Indeed, as Deleuze and Guattari remark, perhaps:

> all concepts include this grey zone and indiscernibility where for a moment the combatants on the ground are confused, and the thinkers tired eyes mistakes the one for the other - not only the German for a Greek but the fascist for a creator of existence and freedom.[39]

For Deleuze and Guattari, Heidegger's philosophy is a case in point: 'He got the wrong people, earth, and blood. For the race summoned forth by art or philosophy is not the one that claims to be pure but rather an oppressed, bastard, lower, anarchical, nomadic and irremediably minor race'.[40] Might we make the claim here

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[38] A core NRx concept is that of 'thedes' which concerns itself with these dynamics of 'in and out' group formations. For NRx the Left is the most thedic of cultures, rife with exclusionary/inclusionary gang signs (see http://www.xenosystems.net/thedes/ (accessed 23 January 2015)).

[39] Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari, *What is Philosophy?*, trans. Hugh Tomlinson and Graham Burchell (London: Verso, 1994), 109.

[40] Deleuze and Guattari, *What is Philosophy?*, 109.

that Land has also got the wrong people (in terms of his imagined future but also of the NRx community his blog links to)? And that, in fact, it is a bastardized, hybrid people - decidedly impure - that hold out the promise of something different?[41] Something that opposes itself to the standardized molar - and major - model of a pure bred (and solely heterosexual) 'man' - the fully-functioning unit of Western modernity (a model that, in fact, no-one is able to live up to)?[42]

So much - at least as a first skirmish - for the thesis on HBD, but what to make of Land's more consistent championing of a capitalism unleashed (that, again, at least on the face of it, follows Deleuze and Guattari's own injunction in *Anti-Oedipus* to 'accelerate the process')? In the chapter on 'Geophilosophy', Deleuze and Guattari suggest that capitalism - a 'world market' that 'extends to the ends of the earth before passing in to the galaxy' - can only ever be a relative deterritorialisation. Modern philosophy, although invariably determined by (and connected to) this socio-economic context (and, more specifically, to the city), goes beyond these conditions in an absolute deterritorialisation that is irreducible to its history (it is this 'event' - 'a

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[41] Or, as Deleuze puts it in one of his final essays, on 'Literature and Life':

> This is not exactly a people called upon to dominate the world. It is a minor people, eternally minor, taken up in a becoming-revolutionary … a bastard people, inferior, dominated, always in becoming, always incomplete. *Bastard* no longer designates a familial state, but the process or drift of the races. I am a beast, a Negro of an inferior race for all eternity. (Gilles Deleuze, "Literature and Life," *Essays Critical and Clinical*, trans. Daniel W. Smith and Michael A. Greco (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1997), 4)

[42] In Edouard Glissant's concept of errantry (and the accompanying concept of 'opacity') we have the beginnings of an ethics that might lead from a genuine respect for difference and diversity. An attitude towards the other that does not lead to judgement and hierarchy, but that also does not subscribe to a simple universalizing gesture in which all heterogeneity is flattened:

> Errant, he challenges and discards the universal - this generalizing edict that summarized the world as something obvious and transparent, claiming for it one presupposed sense and one destiny. He plunges into the opacities of that part of the world to which he has access. Generalization is totalitarian: from the world it chooses one side of the reports, one set of ideas, which it sets apart from others and tries to impose by exporting as a model. The thinking of errantry conceives of totality but willingly renounces any claims to sum it up or to possess it. ('Errantry, Exile', *Poetics of Relation*, trans. Betsy Wing (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press), 20-1)

In passing we might note a fictional instantiation of this opacity in Alan Garner's novel *Strandloper* where there is a non-communication and non-coincidence, but also an 'understanding', between an exiled English peasant with his pagan beliefs and the Australian aborigines with whom he finds himself. Each world is opaque to the other, and yet, in their very singularity, they resonate.

Nature-thought of infinite diagrammatic movements' - that is then reterritorialised on the concept).[43] Such a deterritorialisation involves new and different kinds of thinking which, in and of themselves, summon forth '*a new earth, a new people*' adequate and appropriate to them.[44] Deterritorialisation is clearly operational in Land's projected futures (there is no doubting the acceleration), but the question is whether this is an absolute deterritorialisation (a creative becoming), or, rather, simply an increase in the speed of relative deterritorialisation (an acceleration of already existing capitalist imperatives (Srnicek and Williams' 'dromological accelerationism') alongside their accompanying subjectivities)?[45]

And what is the connection of this deterritorialisation to myth? As well as these two orders of immanence (of capitalism and philosophy) Deleuze and Guattari also write of forms of transcendence in which figures - projections onto the plane of immanence - are opposed to concepts that operate through connection. Indeed, figures themselves erect a transcendent realm from where they originate, installing a vertical hierarchy in place of horizontal linkage (as Deleuze and Guattari remark: 'figures occur whenever immanence is attributed to something').[46] Certainly religion, clearly, operates through figures, but so might myth.[47] In fact, what seems to be happening in Land's myth-system is a linking of the deterritorialisation of capital - accelerated though it might be - with the projected figures of something more transcendent, something inhuman but that nevertheless has an agency. Hence, for example, Gnon or

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[43] Deleuze and Guattari, *What is Philosophy?*, 88.

[44] Deleuze and Guattari, *What is Philosophy?*, 99.

[45] We might note here the technological nature of these already existing imperatives, and, more generally, the capitalist pre-occupation with a techno-scientific paradigm. I attend to this and to Guattari's idea of an alternative 'ethico-aesthetic paradigm' (that involves a different production of subjectivity) in my article 'Guattari's Aesthetic Paradigm: from the Folding of the Finite/Infinite Relation to Schizoanalytic Metamodelisation', *Deleuze Studies*, vol. 4, no. 2 (2010), 256-86. NRx's reliance on scientific 'explanation' (for example in HBD) would likewise seem to involve the privileging of a certain kind of empirical knowledge (and idea of truth) - that which is 'objective', apparent to the senses, can be measured, and so forth).

[46] Deleuze and Guattari, *What is Philosophy?*, 91.

[47] Deleuze and Guattari also suggest that when deterritorialisation takes place through transcendence it implies an imperial situation ('imperial unity or spiritual empire'). If I have implied that NRx operates through such a schema, it also seems clear that from a Landian perspective it is the Cathedral that installs a regime of transcendence (with its own hidden structure, and so forth). Land would then, presumably, position NRx itself as the 'milieu of immanence' (and, indeed, there is something about the NRx vision of autonomous city-states that resonates with Deleuze and Guattari's description of the coastal cities and 'international market' of the Greeks (as there is also with their outlining of some of the other necessary pre-conditions of modern philosophy)). Indeed, all this can become a hall of mirrors - not least as the enemy for both NRx and Deleuze and Guattari's minor people is the typical form of 'Democracy' in and of the West.

Cthulu - but, more generally, the thesis on 'deep structure' (the latter playing the same role - offering a 'superior reality' - as any realm 'above' the world).[48]

A key question that leads on from this (at least for myself) is whether there might be a mythos (if it could still be called as such) that does not operate through transcendence (or deep structure) in this manner and that also connects to the absolute deterritorialisation of philosophy as Deleuze and Guattari define it. A different kind of myth-science perhaps that also relates to radically different kinds, and speeds, of thought (and thus also to the different subjectivities that thinks these - or, indeed, is thought by them). Elsewhere I have written about the relation of intensive speed (the 'stationary voyage') to the more typical idea of speed that involves an acceleration of extensive movement.[49] Here I want to suggest the possibility of a myth-science that operates through immanence rather than transcendence. One that is not hierarchical - and, as such, also, perhaps, not occult. A myth-science that is radically open and democratic when this is less to do with generalizing from, and then universalizing, a standardized subjectivity (the citizen of the Democratic state), than with the invention and gathering of a more minor people.[50] Myth-science as a betrayal of transcendence and refusal of predetermined molar identity. It only needs adding that these future-people - that might well involve other non-human and hybrid forms (silicon-carbon assemblages, alongside alliances with other species) is also us as we are now. Myth-science, in this sense, speaks not *to* you, but to something *in* you.

Might this myth-science also involve the kinds of interference, between the different regimes of thought, that Deleuze and Guattari point towards in the closing pages of *What is Philosophy?* There they write of thought's relation to an outside, and where 'there is extracted from chaos the shadow of the "people to come" in the form that art, but also philosophy and science, summon forth: mass-people, world-people,

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[48] The question here of the role of number - concept or figure? - is interesting. For Land, no doubt numerology is to treat the number as transcendent, but, insofar as numeracy is itself a 'hidden knowledge' - again, a deep structure - it would seem to partake of the structure of the figure. This ambiguity is signaled in Deleuze and Guattari's own discussion of Chinese thought, for example the hexagram, understood as figure that might be said to *approach the condition* of concept (although, Deleuze and Guattari are clear that even in these limit cases (as with other cases of 'disturbing affinities' between concept and figure) there remains a difference in kind (horizontal connection versus transcendent projection)) (see *What is Philosophy?*, 89-92).

[49] See this essay's companion piece - my article 'Deleuze Against Control: from Fictioning to Myth-Science', *Theory, Culture, Society* (forthcoming).

[50] I have written more about this future orientation of the minor - and about how this concept might be brought into productive resonance with contemporary art practice - in Art and the Political: Minor Literature, the War Machine and the Production of Subjectivity', *Art Encounters Deleuze and Guattari: Thought Beyond Representation* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2006), 69-97, and 'From Aesthetics to the Abstract Machine: Deleuze, Guattari, and Contemporary Art Practice', *Deleuze and Contemporary Art*, eds. Stephen Zepke and Simon O'Sullivan (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2010), 189-207.

brain-people, chaos-people'.[51] Indeed, art, for Deleuze and Guattari, partakes in absolute deterritorialisation in its production of different blocs of affect, joining forces with philosophy in a form of future-orientation that characterizes the immanent utopias (and their resistance to the present) I mentioned above. Myth-science in this sense is not a regression as Adorno and Horkheimer might understand it, but is also not a straightforward progression into an already demarcated future. It is, rather, a processual becoming into a *different* future, one that is open, yet to be determined. There is no call here for a belief in something beyond the world, but rather for a belief *in* the world.[52]

In terms of fictions, this myth-science is also not a return to those always already determined and constituted stories (myths of the nuclear family, of Oedipal sexuality, of the Nation state, of a 'glorious death', of nine-to-five careerism and commodity obsession, of patriarchy and racial purity), neither is it a mythos that installs transcendent enuniciators with their accompanying hierarchies – and visions of exit from the present conditions. Myth-science, rather, is connected to the here and now, but it involves the invention of new and different narratives and image-worlds by and for a people who do not recognize themselves in those of the dominant. Traitors myths for traitor subjects perhaps?

In fact, it seems to me, this future orientated practice might involve the utilization of past myth, albeit in new and novel combinations (such myths will be bastardised). As Raymond Williams once pointed out, residual cultures, residual myths, might hold a certain amount of resistance - and even offer opposition - to the narratives of the dominant culture, although it will be crucial to demarcate those that have been 'incorporated' (what Williams calls 'archaic', and in this context we might call major) from those that remain potentially resistant (more minor myths). In relation to this we might also note Gilbert Simondon's outlining of a pre-technical, or magical, consciousness that also gestures forwards to an aesthetic consciousness yet-to-come.[53] I will be returning to Willliams and Simondon in a further essay on myth-science's relation to the past, suffice to say here that the present is always already a

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[51] Deleuze and Guattari, *What is Philosophy?*, 218. I address this idea of a chaoid-subjectivity in more detail in 'Desiring-Machines, Chaoids, Probe-heads: Towards a Speculative Production of Subjectivity (Deleuze and Guattari)', *On the Production of Subjectivity: Five Diagrams of the Finite-Infinite Relation* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2012), 169-202 (see especially 182-7). In terms of myth-science Deleuze and Guattari write of an interesting interference between the planes of philosophy and art where conceptual personae become indistinguishable from aesthetic figures (the latter as not necessarily transcendent projections). They mention Nietzsche's Zarathustra in this context, but, we might also note here Land's own use of a figure like Artaud in his 1990s essays.

[52] To quote Deleuze and Guattari: 'perhaps belief becomes a genuine concept only when it is made into belief in this world and is connected rather than being projected', Deleuze and Guattari, *What is Philosophy?*, 92

[53] Gilbert Simondon, (extract of) 'On the Mode of Existence of Technical Objects', *Deleuze Studies*, trans. N. Mellamphy, D. Mellamphy and N. B. Mellamphy, vol. 5, no. 3 (2011), 407-24.

complex temporal matrix and that certain aspects of the past can indeed be mobilized against the dominant ideas of the contemporary.[54]

Deleuze says something similar in *Cinema 2* about this productive utilisation (that might also involve critique) of yesterday's myths in relation to the films of Gabriel Rocha, where: 'it is not a matter of analysing myth in order to discover its archaic meaning or structure, but of connecting archaic myth to the state of the drives in an absolutely contemporary society, hunger, thirst, sexuality, power, death, worship'.[55] Deleuze goes on to suggest that this work consists, precisely, in crossing the boundaries between the private and the political, producing collective enunciations - of '*putting everything into a trance*, the people and its masters, and the camera itself'.[56]

In these passages from *Cinema 2* Deleuze is gesturing to the importance of aesthetic practices (here modern cinema) for wider political projects (in this case the invention of a people). Indeed, it seems important not only to work out how myth might utilize different times (and fictions) in its project of addressing the present, but also how different forms of myth-making insert themselves within and intersect with reality (and politics) in different ways.[57] Deleuze's idea of a minor literature (and of a minor cinema) points to the importance of a future orientated collective speech-act (as Deleuze has it: 'Not the myth of a past people, but the story-telling of the people to come'). Hyperstition, likewise, has a future orientation, suggesting, as it does, the possibility of positive feedback loops in which what *was* fiction becomes real (indeed, this is the force (and attraction) of hyperstition). But hyperstition also mobilises a mythos, which, at least in some instantiations, can work against the invention of this people. In this sense, perhaps the most important work is that which is done 'on the ground' as it were, not only disentangling Left from Right, but, more crucially, minor from major, when the former involves both a summoning of, and an openness to, a

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[54] I also attend to the different times in and of the present (in relation to Aby Warburg's 'Lecture on Serpent Ritual') in my article 'Pragmatics for Future Subjectivities (*Probe-heads!* Or how to Live in the Face of Fear)', *Journal of Cultural Research*, vol. 10, no. 4 (2006), 309-22.

[55] Gilles Deleuze, *Cinema 2: The Time-Image*, trans. Hugh Tomlinson and H. Galeta (London: Athlone Press, 1989), 219.

[56] Deleuze, *Cinema 2*, 219.

[57] I have attempted to begin this task of working out the connection between fictioning and politics in more detail elsewhere (see the article mentioned above in note 49) but want to point the interested reader to Guattari's essay 'Genet Regained' (in *Schizoanalytic Cartographies*, trans. Andrew Goffey (London: Bloomsbury, 2014), 215-30) that also addresses this connection in relation to literatures' generation of 'existential operators' - or autopoietic nuclei - around which a *different* production of subjectivity might cohere (thanks to Theo Reeves-Evanson for pointing me towards this essay). For more on these 'Z-Points' and their relation to both the production of subjectivity and art practice see my co-authored article, with David Burrows, 'The Sinthome/Z-Point Relation or Art as Non-Schizoanalysis', *Deleuze and the Schizoanalysis of Visual Art* (London: Bloomsbury, 2014), 253-78.

people yet-to-come (afterall the Left (and, again, perhaps this is the most useful insight of NRx) can also work, despite its claims, to exclude (there can, in this sense (and as Deleuze and Guattari make clear in *Anti-Oedipus*) be a fascism *of* the Left)). In fact, it seems to me that in this work of demarcation - that my own essay contributes towards - a constant vigilance is required to prevent the one from slipping over into the other. The terrain of myth-science, in this sense, is indeed both trance *and* grey zone.[58]

(Thanks to David Burrows, John Cussans, Mark Fisher and Harriet Skully for ongoing conversations on the subject of this essay and for comments on an earlier draft.

[58] As Deleuze remarks in his own thesis on the delirium of fiction (and its relation to life):

> Delirium is a disease, the disease par excellence, whenever it erects a race it claims to be pure and dominant. But is it the measure of health when it invokes this oppressed bastard race that ceaselessly stirs beneath dominations, resisting everything that crushes and imprisons, a race that is outlined in relief in literature as process. Here again, there is always the risk that a diseased state will interrupt the process of becoming … the constant risk that a delirium of domination will be mixed with a bastard delirium, pushing literature toward a larval fascism, the disease against which it fights - even if this means diagnosing the fascism within itself and fighting against itself. The ultimate aim of literature is to set free, in the delirium, this creation of a health or this invention of a people, that is, a possibility of life. (Deleuze, 'Literature and Life', 4)